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THE NEW RUSSIA ¹

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THE year 1917 means just the same thing for Russia that the year 1776 meant for the United States. The New Russia is born now, the sister republic of the United States. I wish to say to you that the idea of a separate peace is absolutely repudiated in Russia. Knowing very well the spirit of the Russian government, knowing the spirit of the great Russian democracy, I can positively assure you that no separate peace is possible. Let me give you some illustrations. At the time the great reactionary prime minister, Sturmer, was also appointed minister of foreign affairs, I had a conversation with Mr. Guchkoff, who, as you know, was the first revolutionary minister of the army and navy in the Russian cabinet, and asked him, "What will the Moderates do if Sturmer succeeds in his policy of concluding a separate peace with Germany?" The Moderate Guchkoff answered me in his firm low voice, "In that case, it will be necessary to raise against the Czar not only the voice, but also the hand." I remember also a conversation with Rodzianko, the president of the Duma, before my departure from Russia. He said to me, "Tell the Americans that Russia will fight for ten years if it is necessary; we will not cease from this struggle until the cause of democracy is won." That is the opinion of the Moderate-Liberals in Russia. The Radicals, led by Prof. Miliukoff, formerly minister of foreign affairs, have the same leaning.

You may say that the new minister of foreign affairs, Mr. Teretschenko, holds other opinions; but I can assure you that before my departure, I also saw Mr. Teretschenko and he was

¹ Address delivered at the National Conference on Foreign Relations of the United States, held under the auspices of the Academy of Political Science, at Long Beach, N. Y., May 29, 1917.

enthusiastically for the cause of the Allies. It will be enough to add that Mr. Teretschenko was the chairman of the Kiev branch of the War Industrial Committee, and I am certain that he would never have accepted the post of minister of foreign affairs if he were not convinced that it was necessary for the efficient prosecution of the war.

As for the socialists, only yesterday I received the text of a speech by Tscheidze, leader of the Russian Socialist-Democratic party, made before the Council of Workmen's and Soldiers' Delegates, representing the forces of the Russian democracy. He said to them :

If the Germans think that we shall help them in this great struggle they are terribly mistaken. Until the German workers are through with the Hohenzollerns, we can do nothing with them. The great struggle will be decided at just that time when the workers in Germany throw off the yoke of the military and junker clique.

You now know what is the feeling of the working classes. Perhaps you think the peasants of Russia are of another opinion. Just three weeks ago there was held in Petrograd a meeting of the representatives of all the Russian peasants, and eight hundred voices against twenty proclaimed the necessity of efficient prosecution of the war against Germany. Now you can see the viewpoint of the peasants in Russia. Army delegations from the front also see the awful necessity of continuing the war with Germany. I do not know a single responsible political man in Russia who is on the side of a separate peace with Germany. I can say that emphatically.

What, then, is the policy of the great Russian democracy? There is a great desire for a general peace as soon as the conditions permit it. Does that mean that the Russian democratic forces will try to persuade the western democracies to conclude a general peace immediately? Certainly not. They understand very well that this struggle is so great, and that the sacrifices have been so enormous, that this war cannot end by any kind of compromise; and they understand very well that there is just one solution possible, and that is to make Germany a democratic country. What have the Russian democratic

forces to say on this subject? They proclaim a slogan of no annexations and no indemnities, as you read in the newspapers. That is not true. The position of the Russian democratic forces is that there must be no forced annexations, and no punitive indemnities. You understand, that is quite another matter.

The monarchy in Germany has always been trying to convince the German people that they are striving for national existence as against a great national disruption, and the democratic forces in Russia want to assure the German people that in the event of their becoming a democratic people and putting an end to autocracy in Germany, there will be no danger for the German people as the German people. The principle of no forced annexation means that no territory will be given to any country without the consent of the people in the territory involved. That is quite a democratic principle, and I take the liberty of saying that this policy is in accordance with the policy outlined by your great statesman, President Woodrow Wilson.

In conclusion, I am perfectly sure that the will of the people will prevail, and that the league to enforce peace, about which you have spoken today so much, is a practicable solution of the problems. I am certain that no sacrifices are too great for the accomplishment of this end for which the American and the Russian people will be responsible.

I want to say that Russia has already lost more than a million men who were killed, not counting the many wounded and prisoners of war. If you will remember that every one of this great number was a source of support for five or six or seven people, you can imagine for yourselves how great is the ocean of blood and sadness in Russia; but I say that no sacrifices are too great for the task which we have in hand. I am perfectly sure that those great democracies, the Russian and the American, will go hand in hand in performing this task, and that the duty will be fulfilled.